

Message Text

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ACTION IO-14

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 EA-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 ARA-14 EUR-12

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-02 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-05 PA-02 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-15 /130 W

-----074887 032000Z /73

R 030051Z SEP 77

FM USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5197

INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN

AMEMBASSY CANBERRA

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

UNCLAS USUN 2883

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PORG, UNGA, RQ, US, CU

SUBJ: COMMITTEE OF 24 (C-24) CONSIDERATION OF PUERTO RICO:

STATEMENTS AT SEPTEMBER 2 MEETING

SUMMARY: THIS TELEGRAM REPORTS STATEMENTS MADE AT THE C-24 MEETING ON SEPTEMBER 2. FOLLOWING AUSTRALIA'S PROPOSAL FOR ADJOURNMENT, CUBAN PERM REP ALARCON SPOKE AGAINST THE PROPOSAL. FOLLOWING PASSAGE OF THE MOTION BY 11-7-4(WITH 2 ABSENT), IVORY COAST, INDIA AND CUBA MADE EXPLANATIONS OF VOTE. END SUMMARY.

1. FORRESTER (AUSTRALIA) SAID THE COMMITTEE'S CONSIDERATION OF STATUS OF PUERTO RICO HAD BEEN MARKED BY APPEARANCE OF A NUMBER OF PETITIONERS, REFLECTING FULL RANGE OF OPINION ON MATTER, AND WAS ONE OF MANY INDICATIONS OF CONTINUING "EVOLUTION" OF SITUATION OF PUERTO RICO. THE FUTURE OF PUERTO RICO WAS IN HANDS OF PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES..IT COULD BE DECIDED THROUGH MECHANISMS ALREADY AVAILABLE OR THROUGH OTHERS THAT THEY MIGHT CHOOSE. HE RECALLED STATEMENT BY UNITED STATES PRESIDENT CARTER THAT

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HE WOULD SUPPORT ANY STATUS THE PEOPLE OF PUERTO RICO WANT BUT THAT INITIATIVE FOR CHANGE SHOULD COME FROM THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES. THE RESOLUTION NOW BEFORE THE COMMITTEE ENTAILS AT THE LEAST PREMATURE INVOLVEMENT OF UNITED NATIONS IN MATTER OF PUERTO RICO'S FUTURE, HE SAID. ITS CONTENTS WERE NOT JUSTIFIED BY COMMITTEE'S DISCUSSIONS THIS YEAR OR THE CONTENTS OF THE REPPORTEUR'S

REPORT NOTING "STRENOUS EFFORTS" FOR A CONSENSUS, HE SAID. ONE OF THE STRENGTHS OF THE COMMITTEE HAD BEEN IMPORTANCE PLACED BY IT ON CONESNSUS. ADJOURNMENT OF THIS ITEM FOR A YEAR WOULD COMMEND THE WIDE SUPPORT OF COMMITTEE. THIS WOULD NOT AFFECT THE "EVOLUTION" OF THE SITUATION IN PUERTO RICO ITSELF OR THE SUBSTANTIVE POSITION OF ANY DELEGATION. HE PROPOSED ADJOURNMENT OF THE ITEM, UNDER RULES 116 AND 119 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE UNTIL NEXT YEAR.

2. CUBAN PERM REP ALARCON, SPEAKING AGAINST THE AUSTRALIAN MOTION, SAID THAT YESTERDAY, WHEN THE REPRESENTATIVE OF AUSTRALIA HAD REQUESTED 24 HOURS MORE ON THIS QUESTION, HIS DELEGATION HAD NOT RAISED ANY OBJECTION EVEN THOUGH THE REVISED DRAFT (SUBMITTED YESTERDAY) WAS QUITE CLOSE TO THE ORIGINAL.

CONSEQUENTLY, IT SEEMED SURPRISING THAT THE DELEGATION OF AUSTRALIA TODAY HAD REQUESTED ONE MORE YEAR FOR POSTPONEMENT OF THE QUESTION, HE SAID. HIS PROPOSAL HAD CONTRADICTED HIS OWN ARGUMENTS.

THIS YEAR, THE COMMITTEE HAD HEARD STATEMENTS BY MANY PUERTO RICAN PETITIONERS AND HE DID NOT THINK ANY HAD REQUESTED THAT THE COMMITTEE NOT ACT. TODAY, HIS DELEGATION OPPOSED THE AUSTRALIAN MOTION AND OBJECTED TO IT UNDER RULE UNCLASSIFIED

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116 OF THE RULES OF PROCEDURE. HE REQUESTED A VOTE BY ROLL CALL.

3. EXPLANATIONS OF VOTE AFTER THE VOTE

NURU (TANZANIA) SAID THAT SHE HAD NOT BEEN IN THE ROOM WHEN THE VOTE HAD TAKEN PLACE AND WISHED TO RECORD HER VOTE AS A NEGATIVE ONE.

SOULEYMANE SAKO (IVORY COAST) SAID THAT HIS DELEGATION HAD VOTED TO DEFER CONSIDERATION OF THE MATTER BECAUSE THE COMMITTEE WAS DEALING WITH AN IMPORTANT QUESTION WHICH DIVIDED NOT ONLY THE COMMITTEE BUT THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AS WELL. A POSTPONEMENT OF THE MATTER WOULD GIVE GOVERNMENTS MORE TIME TO CONSIDER THEIR POSITIONS.

DUBEY (INDIA) SAID HE HAD VOTED TO DEFER THE QUESTION BEFORE THE COMMITTEE BECAUSE HE HAD HOPED THAT EFFORTS TO ACHIEVE A CONSENSUS WOULD HAVE WORKED. A DEFERMENT WOULD GIVE TIME FOR A CONSENSUS TO EMERGE.

4. ALARCON SAID THAT HE HAD ALREADY EXPLAINED THE REASONS

FOR THE OPPOSITION OF HIS DELEGATION TO THE MOTION TO DEFER. THIS DEFERMENT HAD DIVIDED THE COMMITTEE MUCH MORE THAN A VOTE ON THE CUBAN RESOLUTION WOULD HAVE. HIS DELEGATION HAD OFFERED A REVISED TEXT OF ITS RESOLUTION TO ACHIEVE THE WIDEST AGREEMENT ON THE ISSUE. IT WAS NOT THROUGH CUBAN ACTION THAT THE COMMITTEE HAD BEEN UNABLE TO REACH AN AGREEMENT, HE SAID. THE COMMITTEE'S FAILURE TO ACT LED TO NOTHING BUT UNDERMINING ITS PRESTIGE AND DIGNITY. ITS ACTION WAS NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE THEMSELVES. THIS "UNFORTUNATE DECISION" WAS THE RESULT OF ACTIONS OF COLONIALIST FORCES WHICH HAD ALWAYS OPPOSED THE WORK OF THE COMMITTEE, HE SAID. THIS AFTERNOON'S ACTION WAS NOT IN KEEPING WITH THE MANDATE OF THE COMMITTEE. THE POSITION OF HIS DELEGATION WAS SOLELY UNCLASSIFIED

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BASED ON MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE WHICH ALSO AFFECTED COLONIAL CASES IN ASIA, AFRICA AND OTHER PARTS OF THE WORLD. AS WELL, THE CUBAN PEOPLE FELT A COMMITMENT TO DEFEND THE FREEDOM AND INDEPENDENCE OF THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE AS ENERGETICALLY AS THEY HAD SOUGHT THEIR OWN. HE SAID THE PUERTO RICAN PEOPLE WERE SURE TO ATTAIN VICTORY, NO MATTER HOW MANY ACTIVITIES CONTRARY TO THEIR INALIENABLE RIGHTS MIGHT BE UNDERTAKEN. HE LISTED THE PUERTO RICAN NATIONALISTS IN U.S. PRISONS.

5. ALARCON'S STATEMENT WAS FOLLOWED BY SHOUTS AND SUSTAINED APPLAUSE FROM THE PUBLIC GALLERY.
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